

NEWS RELEASE



Premier of New South Wales
Australia

GOVERNMENT CONFRONTS DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

State Plan Target Reduce violent crime by 10% by 2016

Friday 24 November 2006

NSW Premier Morris Iemma today unveiled a \$28 million, four year package to improve support for victims of domestic violence.

"Today we mark White Ribbon Day with an unrelenting affirmation that as a Government we will do everything within our power to support the victims of domestic violence, and pursue the perpetrators," Mr Iemma said.

"Anyone who commits an act of domestic violence is a coward.

"Women everywhere are entitled to feel safe, and they should feel safest in their own homes.

"The latest research shows that acts of domestic violence between parents can have a serious effect on a child's psychological development.

"In June of this year I announced that we would be developing a comprehensive package aimed at preventing domestic violence.

"We've made good progress, making changes to the laws governing AVOs, but there is more work to do.

"The package of measures I outline today is the second part of our policy response.

"Today NSW is saying no to domestic violence, if you are a victim, we will help you, if you are a perpetrator, we will stop you.

The next phase of our domestic violence package includes:

- **An additional \$2 million** each year to increase counselling, accommodation and support services provided by non-Government organisations;
- **More than \$3 million** annually to provide case management for domestic violence victims. This funding will provide early intervention and help victims of domestic violence access support and guidance through the legal process;
- **\$2.1 million each year** to continue the Domestic Violence Court Intervention Model at Wagga Wagga and Campbelltown. The model has been proven to increase guilty pleas and reduce court waiting times. Under this model, police work with local domestic violence support services to improve evidence collection, help prepare the victim for court, and provide support services.

"These measures won't stop domestic violence by themselves but they represent a solid further step in tackling this issue," Mr lemma said.

The Premier said the Government would continue to hold discussions with domestic violence support groups to explore areas where further reforms could help combat domestic violence.

Earlier this year, the NSW Government introduced sweeping reforms to the laws governing the use of AVOs including:

- Allowing for police to make an application for an AVO even when the victim shows a reluctance to proceed;
- Changing the test for determining whether to grant an AVO in situations where a repeat victim states they have no fear but the Magistrate forms the view there is a reasonable likelihood that further violence will occur.
- Allowing police to apply for interim orders by telephone on a 24 hour basis; and
- Amending the Crimes Act to restrict the circumstances in which children can be called and cross examined in AVO proceedings